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# IS THE NEW IMMIGRATION DANGEROUS TO THE COUNTRY?

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Is our country in serious danger from the flood of immigration which is pouring into it at the present time?

This is a question which should be seriously considered.

Immigrants are now coming into the country at a more rapid rate than at any other time in its history. During the first quarter of the last century, the immigration averaged about 12,000 a year. During the second quarter of the century, it averaged annually about 100,000. In the years of the third quarter of the century, it averaged about 260,000, and in those of the last quarter of the century it averaged about 400,000.

During the three years of the new century, which have made a record, the yearly average was 665,000. Here are the figures, stated in round terms:

Period.	Number of Immigrants.	Annual Average.
1800 to 1825.....	300,000	8,000
1825 to 1850.....	2,500,000	100,000
1850 to 1875.....	6,500,000	260,000
1875 to 1900.....	10,000,000	400,000
1900 to 1903.....	2,000,000	665,000

The above figures are, of course, approximate, for it would not be expected that they would fall in exact millions or half-millions in each quarter of the century; but they are sufficiently accurate to serve for this general study. For the benefit, however, of those who desire a more accurate statement, the following table gives the exact figures, by decades, from 1820, the earliest year in which any record of the immigration was kept, also an estimate for the period from 1789 to 1820.

*Immigration into the United States by Decennial Periods, 1821 to 1900, and from 1901 to 1903.*

Period.	Number.	Annual Average.
1789 to 1820 (estimated) .....	250,000	12,000
1821 to 1830 (decade) .....	143,439	14,343
1831 to 1840 " .....	599,125	59,912
1841 to 1850 " .....	1,713,251	171,325
1851 to 1860 " .....	2,598,214	259,821
1861 to 1870 " .....	2,314,824	231,482
1871 to 1880 " .....	2,812,191	281,219
1881 to 1890 " .....	5,246,613	524,661
1891 to 1900 " .....	3,844,420	384,442
1901 to 1903 (three years) .....	1,993,707	664,569

This gives a grand total of 21,515,784. To this there must be added the number who have come from Canada since 1885, for there has been no attempt to make a record of the immigration from Canada since that date, owing to the difficulty of making a satisfactory record of the real immigrants among the large number of people crossing and recrossing between the United States and Canada. The fact, however, that the last Census showed 1,183,000 persons of Canadian birth in the United States in 1900, justifies the conclusion that the number coming into this country from Canada is large, and has probably amounted to half a million since 1885. This would, therefore, justify the general statement that the total number of immigrants who have come into the United States since the beginning of the last century is, in round terms, 22,000,000.

The Census reports show that the number of persons of foreign birth residing in the United States in 1900 was 10,341,276. Thus, it appears that practically one-half of the 22,000,000 immigrants who have come into the United States since the beginning of the last century are still residents, and in most cases citizens of the country. They formed, in 1900, 13.6 per cent. of the population. They formed in many States more than 33 per cent. of the total population. The Census shows a total increase of population from all sources, from 1890 to 1900, of 13,681,137; while the total number of persons coming into the country as immigrants during that period was 3,844,420, exclusive of those from Canada, or probably 4,000,000 in round numbers.

In a study of this question, it is perhaps not improper to consider also the native-born persons of foreign parentage. If any share of the persons of foreign birth coming into the United States bring with them sentiments and customs of a dangerous

or otherwise objectionable character, they are likely to be transmitted, in a greater or less degree, to their children, who naturally and necessarily absorb, in early life, at least, the sentiments and customs of their parents, and are likely to be influenced by them in their habits of life after reaching maturity. When we consider, from this standpoint, the question of the effect of the large foreign-born population upon our institutions and customs, the problem becomes even more serious. The last Census shows that, in 1900, there were in the United States 15,687,322 persons born in this country of foreign-born parents. Adding to this the 10,341,276 persons of foreign birth, it gives a total of over 26,000,000 persons of foreign parentage in the United States, not including any of its island possessions or Alaska. This means that more than one-third of the entire population of the United States—or, to be more exact, 34 per cent.—is of foreign parentage. To put it in a single sentence, 13 1-3 per cent. of the entire population is of foreign birth and 34 per cent. of foreign parentage. In no less than fifteen States, persons of foreign parentage (including those born abroad and those born in the United States of foreign parents) formed more than one-half of the population, and in seven States more than 60 per cent. of the total. In practically all the great cities of the country, except those of the South, the persons of foreign parentage form more than one-half of the total, and in each of the great cities of New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Detroit, Cleveland, and Milwaukee they form more than 75 per cent. of the total population, and thus may easily and absolutely control in law-making and administration if they choose to act in concert.

In attempting to consider the effect of this great mass of foreign people and sentiment upon our population and institutions, it is proper to consider the nationalities of those coming to the United States and of those now forming this large part of its population. During the time in which the people of northern Europe formed the bulk of the immigration, there was a general feeling that immigration was advantageous. They were readily assimilated into our population, they quickly adopted our customs and sentiments, they came intending to make this country their permanent home, and their energies were devoted to the establishment of homes and the retention in the United States of whatever they were able to accumulate in the shape of finances.

With the later years, the source of the stream has somewhat changed, and with this change has come a change in the character of the stream itself. The question which we naturally desire seriously to consider is, whether the change is such as to impair the value of the immigration to the country.

Of the 22,000,000 people who have come into the United States for the purpose of making this country their home, speaking in round terms, 5,000,000 have come from Germany, 4,000,000 from Ireland, 2,750,000 from England, 2,000,000 from Canada, and about 1,500,000 each from Italy, Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Norway and Sweden. These eight nationalities contribute 20,000,000 of the 22,000,000 who have come into the country since 1800. Of this total of 22,000,000 people, 16,000,000 have come from Germany, Ireland, Scotland, England, Norway and Sweden, France, and Canada; and 4,500,000 have come from Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia. This does not on its face look as though the proportion of the immigrants from Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia was alarmingly large. But it is when we examine the record of recent years that we find the evidence of great increase in arrivals from the last-named countries. The total number of arrivals from these countries from 1820 to the close of 1895 was 2,270,000, and the total number from the close of 1895 to the close of the fiscal year, 1903, was 2,312,000. On the other hand, the total number of arrivals from Germany, Ireland, England, Norway and Sweden, and Canada prior to the end of 1895 was a little over 14,000,000, and since that date a little over 1,000,000. Thus the number of arrivals from Italy, Russia, and Austria-Hungary since 1895 is equal to all the arrivals from those countries prior to that date; while in the case of Germany, England, Ireland, Norway and Sweden, and Canada, the number since 1895 is but about one-fourteenth of the number from those countries prior to that date. Prior to the close of 1895, the total number of arrivals from Italy, Russia and Austria-Hungary formed but 12½ per cent. of the grand total of arrivals; since that date the arrivals from those three countries have formed over 60 per cent. of the total. The following tables show the number of arrivals from each of the eight principal countries from which our immigration is drawn, prior to the close of the fiscal year 1895, and from that date to the close of the fiscal year 1903, and the average per year for each

decade from 1820 to 1903, and gives an opportunity to note the relative changes in recent years.

*Immigrants from Principal Countries, 1820-1895 and 1895-1903.*

Countries.	Total from 1820 to June 30, 1895.	Total from June 30, 1895, to June 30, 1903.	Total from 1820 to 1903.
Germany .....	4,940,538	197,553	5,138,091
Ireland .....	3,718,356	256,213	3,974,569
England .....	2,647,230	118,946	2,766,176
Canada .....	1,800,000	200,000	2,000,000
Norway and Sweden...	1,136,875	268,545	1,405,420
Italy .....	680,598	908,651	1,589,249
Austria-Hungary .....	716,265	806,659	1,522,924
Russia and Poland....	873,887	597,137	1,471,024

*Annual Immigration by Decades, 1820-1900 and 1901-1903.*

Years.	Germany.	Ireland.	England.	Norway and Sweden.	Russia and Poland.	Austria-Hungary.	Italy.
1821-30 ....	676	5,072	2,216	9	9	—	40
1831-40 ....	15,245	20,738	7,314	120	64	—	225
1841-50 ....	43,462	78,071	26,333	1,390	65	—	187
1851-60 ....	95,166	91,412	38,564	2,093	162	—	923
1861-70 ....	78,746	43,577	56,812	10,929	453	780	1,172
1871-80 ....	71,818	43,687	46,047	21,124	5,225	7,296	5,576
1881-90 ....	145,297	65,482	65,748	56,836	26,508	35,372	30,730
1891-1900 ..	54,392	40,349	28,231	32,593	58,686	59,704	65,566
1901-03 ....	30,013	31,666	14,003	51,482	109,566	163,767	181,664

But is all this as serious as we are accustomed to consider it? Is the foreign population growing more rapidly than our power to assimilate it? Is the element of the immigration which is so rapidly increasing really so dangerous a factor in our civilization as we are accustomed to think? Is it filling our jails and almshouses as rapidly as we hear that glibly talked of? Does its objectionable character offset its advantages as a ready and willing labor-supply in this rapidly developing country, where labor is so necessary a factor of our development and prosperity? These are questions which we should carefully consider, before condemning this latest feature of our immigration and demanding that the gates be closed. Perhaps they ought to be more carefully guarded, to prevent the admission of the more objectionable elements of these masses of recent arrivals; but the whole question of the relation of these people to our industries, and to the development of crime and dependency, ought to be studied carefully before a wholesale condemnation of any class or nationality is made.

It is difficult to measure the relation of the recent arrivals to

crime and dependency, because the figures of the Census of 1900 on this subject are not yet published. But those of 1890 are available; and, while the number of persons of these classes in the United States at that time was not so great as at present, they were apparently sufficient to determine pretty well what their habits are with reference to crime and dependency. In 1890, there were in the United States 182,614 Russians, 182,342 Italians, 147,416 Poles, 123,185 Austrians, and 62,409 Hungarians, besides large numbers of other classes from northern Europe, whom we now look upon as welcome immigrants, and as much less liable to become a burden or an unsatisfactory element of our population. With more than half a million of this so-called "objectionable class" in the country in 1890, and a thorough analysis of their relation to crime and dependency supplied by the Census of that year, we may form some idea as to whether we are justified in the alarm which is being felt in regard to the large increase in its numbers during recent years.

As has been already stated, the eight groups of people who form the bulk of our immigration are from Germany, Ireland, England, Canada, Norway and Sweden, Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Russia. The immigrants from the first five named are generally looked upon as valuable accessions to our population. Let us, then, compare the relation to crime and dependency of what has been termed the "objectionable class"—the Italians, Russians, and Austro-Hungarians—with that of these other more welcome classes from northern Europe. The Census of 1890 presents a table showing the number of persons in each million who were in that year prisoners, juvenile offenders, paupers and inmates of benevolent institutions. A study of this table develops the fact that each million of the various nationalities contributed to these four classes as follows: Poles, 4,580; Austrians, 4,805; Russians, 5,202; Germans, 5,662; Hungarians, 6,792; English, 7,160; Scotch, 7,288; Italians, 9,877; French, 10,864; Irish, 16,624.

It is not claimed that this answers the assertion that the foreign-born population supplies a larger percentage of the dependent and criminal class than does the native population. On the contrary, the record of the Census of 1890 shows that 7,718 out of each million of foreign-born whites were inmates of these four classes of institutions, and only 3,708 in each million of na-

tive whites. The same Census also shows that 3,843 out of each million of foreign birth were insane, and only 1,329 out of each million of native-born persons. But it does seem to throw some doubt upon the oft-repeated assertion that the immigrants from Italy, Russia and Austria-Hungary are more likely to become dependent or criminal than other immigrants.

It is not assumed that there is serious objection, on the part of any considerable part of the population of the United States, to the class of immigrants who formed the bulk of the arrivals in earlier years. The sturdy, peace-loving people from the north of Europe have formed, and are continuing to form, a valuable addition to our population, in the agricultural sections, in the mining regions, in manufacturing, in the construction of great public works where willing labor is required in great numbers, and in the cities where workmen are needed. It is not necessary to come to the defence of this class of immigration, which has proved so valuable in developing our great country, which could not have been developed with any such rapidity and success without the aid of the immigrants who have come to our assistance. It is to determine whether the class from southern Europe and Russia, which is now coming in such large numbers as to change the character of the entire stream, is of a sufficiently different character to make it advisable to establish barriers which may at least check its flow in our direction. Certainly, the figures just quoted, as to the number per million of the various groups which become part of the criminal or dependent class, do not indicate that the people of southern Europe or Russia have so far proved more objectionable in this particular than others from abroad. On the contrary, a smaller number per million of these particular classes falls into the dependent and criminal group than of those who are so cordially welcomed.

Now let us consider the question of education. It is true that those coming to the United States, especially those from southern Europe and Russia, are in too many cases deficient in education. But this has been, to a great extent, the case with our immigration for many years, and we have not felt any serious effect from it, because of the fact that most of the immigrants quickly obtained a sufficient education to enable them to conform to the customs of the country, and because of the further fact that their own deficiencies in this particular seem to have stimulated them to



greater efforts on behalf of their children than would have been the case under other circumstances. Certainly it is a fact, for some reason, that the children of foreign-born citizens of the United States take greater advantage of the public schools, apparently, than do those of native-born persons. This seems a surprising statement, a surprising fact, but it seems to be a fact, nevertheless. The Census of 1900 presents a statement of the number and nativity of children between the ages of 5 and 14 at school in 1900, also the total number of children between the ages of five and fourteen. A study of this statement shows that 65 per cent. of the children between these ages, born of native parents, were reported as attending school, while 71 per cent. of those of like age limits, born of foreign-born parents, were reported as attending school. These figures relate solely to white persons. It is proper to add that, of those between the ages of fifteen and twenty, a larger percentage of those born of native parents were in school than was the case with children of foreign-born parents; but as to the education obtained prior to the age of fifteen, it would seem that the citizens of foreign birth are, as a whole, more faithful in urging the attendance of their children at the public schools than the native parents.

Another and even more striking fact developed by a study of the Census of 1900 is, that the illiteracy among persons born in the United States of foreign parents is much less than among those born of native parents. This may seem difficult of belief, but if the skeptical will turn to page CVI. of the second volume of the Census for 1900, they will there find a table which shows that of the 30,404,762 white persons, ten years of age and over, born of native parents, no less than 1,737,050, or 5.7 per cent., were classed as illiterates; while of the 10,958,803 native whites, ten years of age and over, born of foreign parents, only 179,384, or 1.6 per cent., were classed as illiterates.

It would appear from this analysis that the percentage of immigrants from Russia and southern Europe who ultimately become inmates of prisons, reformatory institutions, almshouses and charitable institutions, is much smaller than of those from northern Europe; that a larger percentage of the children of the immigrants, as a whole, attend school during the years between five and fourteen than is the case among the children of native whites, and that there is a smaller percentage of illiterates among those

born in this country of foreign parents than among those born of native white parents.

The next question to consider is whether the immigrants are now coming too rapidly to be assimilated. It is generally conceded that this has not been the case in the past. Certainly the standard of our population, as to industry, morality, and intelligence, even with the large foreign element which it has had for many years, has compared favorably with that of other countries. And while the immigration is larger now than ever before, it is no larger in proportion to the population than on many former occasions. It must be remembered that the native-born population of the United States has rapidly increased in recent years; and that even though twice as many immigrants are now coming to the country as in some former periods, they find twice as many native-born Americans to assist them in adopting American customs and becoming good American citizens. The following table gives the population of the United States and the share of native and foreign born at each decennial year since 1850:

Year	Native Born.	Foreign Born.	Total.	Per cent. Foreign Born.
1850 .....	20,947,274	2,244,602	23,191,876	9.7
1860 .....	27,304,624	4,138,697	31,443,321	13.2
1870 .....	32,991,142	5,567,229	38,558,371	16.8
1880 .....	43,475,840	6,679,943	50,155,783	13.3
1890 .....	53,761,652	9,308,104	63,069,756	14.7
1900 .....	65,843,302	10,460,085	76,303,387	13.6

With this evidence that the immigration now coming does not, apparently, add more to the dependent or criminal class than that which has always been welcomed, and the evidence that the foreign-born population contributes as well educated a succeeding generation to the population of the country as do the native whites, we may consider the effect of immigration upon industry and production, upon wealth and general prosperity and the political government of the nation. To do this, it is necessary to determine the location in which the persons who have come as immigrants have settled. If we can find a group of States containing most of the persons of foreign birth, we may, perhaps, by comparing conditions in those States with conditions in the others which have but few of that class, draw some inferences as to the effect of the presence or absence of this class of population. A careful study of the Census figures of 1900 develops the fact that

over three-fourths of the foreign-born population of the United States are located in twelve of the fifty States and Territories of the United States. These twelve States are New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and California. They contain just one-half of the total population of the United States, 78 per cent. of the total foreign-born population, and 81 per cent. of what has been called the "objectionable class," which comprises the Italians, Hungarians, Austrians, Bohemians, and Poles, except those from German Poland.

Here, then, is an opportunity to study conditions in two groups of States, in which the relative share of the foreign-born population to the total population is contrasted with sufficient sharpness to justify the assumption that the presence or absence of a foreign-born population has something to do with the relative wealth-producing power and consequent prosperity. It goes without saying that in such a country as this, with lands to put under cultivation, with mines to develop, with railroads to build, with great river-and-harbor works to be constructed, with manufacturing and transportation rapidly developing and demanding plentiful supplies of labor, men and muscle are needed, and that such a country can assimilate and make profitable use of a larger immigration and a greater proportionate element of the class in question than other countries. And since we find in this group of twelve States just one-half of the total population of the United States, the one group having 78 per cent., and the other group only 22 per cent. of the total foreign-born population, it would seem that a study of their relative prosperity and wealth-creating power would give some suggestion as to the value or otherwise of this large element which can furnish the labor-supply necessary for such development. When to this we add the further fact that 81 per cent. of the "objectionable class" is found in the one group of States and only 19 per cent. in the other, it gives opportunity at least to consider the relation of this particular class to the industries of the sections where it abounds or does not abound.

Entering upon a consideration of conditions in the twelve States named, which, it should be remembered, have just one-half of the total population of the country, it may be said that persons of foreign birth compose 21 per cent. of the total population,

while in the other thirty-eight States and Territories having the other one-half of the total population, persons of foreign birth form but 6 per cent. of the total population. In the twelve States, the "objectionable class" forms 3.7 per cent. of the total; in the other thirty-eight States and Territories it forms less than one per cent. of the total. The twelve States had in 1900 a population of 38,105,863, with a total foreign-born population of 8,073,676, of which 1,445,099 was of the "objectionable class." The other thirty-eight States and Territories had in 1900 a population of 38,043,523, a foreign-born population of 2,295,629, of which 336,655 was of the "objectionable class."

The first measurement of prosperity which suggests itself is that of wealth-producing power. If we find in those States whose population is composed of 21 per cent. of foreign born, a much greater *per capita* of wealth produced than in those having but 6 per cent. of foreign-born population, we may assume that the labor of this element contributes, in some degree at least, to that greater wealth-producing power, and this will be especially true if we find that many of the States of the larger group have an equally fruitful soil and even more hospitable climate, equally promising mineral resources, and as favorable conditions for manufacturing. The chief elements of wealth production may be classed as the products of agriculture, the products of the mines, and the value added to raw materials by manufacturing. In attempting to determine the value of wealth created in these two groups of States in the Census year 1900, the total value of agricultural products is taken, the total value of the products of the mines, and the total value of manufactures turned out, less the value of the material used in manufacturing. While this is, of course, only a rough approximation of the total wealth created, since it does not include buildings, railroads constructed, or improvements to property of any kind, it does seem to give approximately the value of the wealth created from the principal sources, and seems to be at least a fair method of comparing conditions of wealth production in the various States and groups of States.

Taking this method of measurement and applying it to the two great groups of States, it is found that the wealth created by these three principal methods in the twelve States having one-half of the total population and 78 per cent. of the foreign-born population was, in 1900, \$6,832,000,000, and that in the other

group, having the other half of the total population and but 22 per cent. of the foreign-born population, it was \$4,537,000,000. In the case of the twelve States having 78 per cent. of the foreign-born population and one-half of the total, the wealth production from these three sources was \$179.31 *per capita*; in the other group, it was \$119.98 *per capita*. Official figures of 1890 gave 60 per cent. of the total wealth of the country to the group of twelve States, and 40 per cent. to the group of thirty-eight States. The relative proportion of foreign-born population in 1890 did not differ materially from that of 1900. So it may be said that the one group of States having one-half of the total population and 78 per cent. of those of foreign birth, had in 1890 60 per cent. of the total wealth and produced in 1900 60 per cent. of the total wealth produced in that year; while the other group with an equal population, but only 22 per cent. of the foreign-born population, had but 40 per cent. of the wealth in 1890 and produced but 40 per cent. of the wealth produced in 1900.

It is true that much of this great production of wealth in the twelve States named is due to the presence of greater capital invested in manufacturing and mining, but it is also true that these industrial enterprises are rendered successful only by the co-operation of labor, much of which is obtained from the large foreign-born element of the population.

One other question worthy of consideration is that of the relation of the foreign-born voters to the political government of the communities of which they are members. It is often charged that they are a dangerous factor in politics, local and national, that they are easily influenced by corrupt men, and that their votes are in many cases a purchasable quantity. This may be true, and probably is in a greater or less degree; yet a close analysis of the voting power of the foreign-born citizens does not show that they are, as a class, as attentive to politics as might be supposed from the assertions which are frequently made on that subject. The Massachusetts Labor Bureau has recently made a careful analysis of the foreign-born citizenship of that State in this particular, and finds that 34.7 per cent. of the persons of foreign birth who are eligible for citizenship and for the exercise of the voting power, have deliberately failed to take advantage of that privilege and have not become naturalized citizens. This does not look as though the foreign-born citizen was especially "ad-

dicted to politics." A further study of this analysis shows that this is especially true of what is termed the "objectionable class," viz., the Italians, Russians, and Poles. The analysis shows that 56 per cent. of the Russians, 58 per cent. of the Poles and 62 per cent. of the Italians in Massachusetts who are eligible for citizenship have failed to become citizens, while of the Irish, only 21 per cent. and of the Germans only 25 per cent. failed to take advantage of their privilege to become voters. Another interesting fact in this analysis is worthy of mention. It is now generally conceded, even by many of those who supported Mr. Bryan in 1896, that the silver proposition which formed the basis of the contest of that year, was a mistake, was not justified by conditions. It is well remembered that the hope of those opposed to the silver proposition in that contest lay in the foreign-born voters, and that their confidence in this respect was not misplaced. The twelve States which have been here named as having 78 per cent. of the foreign-born population had given 102 electoral votes to the Democratic candidate in 1892, and 101 to the Republican candidate; yet, in 1896, those same States gave 202 electoral votes to the party opposed to the free-silver proposition, and one to the party favoring it.

These figures and conclusions are not absolute, but they may be considered as at least suggestive. It is hard to measure an element of this peculiar character by hard and fast lines, or to apply the statistical measuring rod with an assurance of obtaining exact results in the way of conclusions. But they do seem to suggest (1) that the present immigration, large as it is, is not beyond our power of assimilation and probably of healthful assimilation; (2) that the so-called "objectionable class" is not the class which is filling the jails and almshouses; (3) that while they are somewhat deficient in the matter of education, that of their children is likely to compare favorably with that of our own population, and that they will thus contribute a safe and valuable element to the future population of the country; (4) that they are not, as a class, as dangerous an element in politics as has been frequently asserted; and (5) that they are an important factor in the development and wealth-producing power of the country, and that their coming, subject to proper restrictions, seems still likely to prove a net benefit to the country.

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